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buckskin was tied about its neck, which slowly tightened, in drying, until the pony gasped for breath and staggered helplessly; a shove sent the animal crashing over the rim. It bounced from ledge to ledge, then, caught on a projecting point, lay there to decay, far above its intended destination.

In the village, peach trees were cut to free their spirits that they might bear their sweet, luscious fruit in the new home of the beloved wife. The house was burned; the girl's name must never again be spoken.

Indeed no biographies could be more fascinating than those of our two policemen, if the author delved into the forces that made each man what he was: the cloak of courtliness concealing Lanoman, the Indian of primitive culture; Vesnor, the stern, forceful Indian of the warpath, healed by the Christians' Savior. By apportioning duties according to the merits of the man, we had an efficient police force.

When a feud broke out resulting in the destruction of growing corn, I called on Vesnor. It might mean a quarrel that would stir the tribe to the boiling point, or it might be child's play, but I wanted the help of a fearless man.

Late one Saturday afternoon Little Jim entered my office. He wore the Indians' comfortable moccasins, but his hair was cut short, white-man fashion. Faded blue jeans and a torn red shirt clung to his damp body, for the canyon walls still reflected the heat.

"Um-m," he began with embarrassment, "Me got corn. Little grow." He reached his hand down to about twelve inches above the floor to indicate his corn's tallness. "Last night, womans walk on corn. Break down. No good."

I went with him to his corn patch down in the village. It was a small plot, about fifteen feet square. The corn on one corner was broken and trampled into the ground, and everywhere were the imprints of small, bare feet.

"Whose footprints are these?" I asked, for a smart Indian like Little Jim couldn't be fooled on the imprint of a tribesman's foot.

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He stooped and carefully examined the earth, "Maybe woman's," he volunteered. 58 69

"Yes, you said in the beginning that women had destroyed your corn. You will have to tell me their names."

He frowned deeply as he viewed the broken stalks, but finally admitted, "I think two womans: Billy squaw; Prince squaw."

"I'll have Vesnor warn them not to bother your corn," I assured him. "I'll also investigate this myself. They must have a reason for destroying your crop."

I took my departure, and Little Jim joined his family, his wife E-e and two small sons. They formed a circle about the food for the evening meal—burned squash, cold and unpalatable. E-e broke off hunks of the sodden stuff and handed them to the children who devoured them hungrily while she and Little Jim shared the unappetizing fare. E-e was an indifferent housekeeper and one of the poorest cooks in the village, but she was a good-natured wife and her cheerful companionship pleased Little Jim.

Vesnor was waiting for me at the office as usual, so I sent him to instruct Prince and Billy that their wives destroy no more gardens. I also told him to bring the two women to my office on Monday evening for a hearing.

School had not yet convened Monday morning when Billy appeared at the building, carrying in his hand seven stalks of newly cut corn. He held them out for me to see.

"That my corn," he said angrily. "E-e cut with knife."

I examined the seven stalks. They were cleanly cut. "What has happened in the village that causes the women to destroy one another's gardens?" I asked Billy.

"No un'erstan'," he said, still angry.

"You know that your wife walked on Little Jim's corn. He has a family and needs all the food he can raise. Did you tell her to leave his garden alone?"

"Vesnor say. She hear." Billy looked chagrined. It was a different story when blame fell on his own household.

"Did Vesnor tell your wife to come to my office this evening?

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578 We are going to put a stop to this destruction of food, and I am
691 going to learn the reason back of it."

"He say. She hear."

"I'll have E-e brought up too," I told him. "We'll find out why she got into this feud."

Billy turned and walked slowly home, carrying the wilted corn in his hand.

800 I was so eager to get at the trial and learn why these complacent, childish women were determinedly destroying one another's food, that I forgot this was a school day until the bushes parted. The little folks came through at a comfortable walk and entered the classroom. Vesnor had learned to restrain his impatience, but experience had convinced me by now that if he and his pony were absent, the children would spend the day playing in the creek.

578 Vesnor, Little Jim, Billy, Prince and the three women were
691 waiting at my office when school was dismissed. I unlocked the
695 door, and they filed in, the women abashed by the formality and frightened by Vesnor's disapproving mien. They had been accustomed to indulging their love of trickery until the time came for physical combat; the victory then went to the one who could scratch and pull hair faster than her antagonist. A hearing in the superintendent's office was something new and quite disturbing.

Since Little Jim was one of the plaintiffs, he was the first to testify. He stated his case briefly: "I go work corn. Little light. Sun no come up. I see Billy squaw, Prince squaw in corn. Make walk on stalk, break down. I see run in bushes. Run to camp." Little Jim sat down, his troubled face creased by an angry frown.

203 At that moment a woman, her *sutam* floating behind her, breezed through the door and eased her plump body into a chair. She was Vesnor's wife, a giggling woman, much younger than he, whose ears were attuned to gossip. She had come to gather news, first hand, so that she might gleefully dispense it later to an eager audience. This feud had been going on for some time, possibly years, and interest was keen, for word of the trial had swept through the village.

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Billy's wife testified in her own defense. She rose from her chair and moved to the center of the floor with the grace of a shy wild animal. She was slender and lovely, with the clear brown skin, small shapely hands and feet that distinguish the elite. The long bang above her piquant face, the neat, bobbed hair, the colorful *sutaw* over the clean, gay dress made her a picture that would attract attention anywhere. Her face had been artistically decorated for the occasion: a round spot of red paint glowed dully over each cheekbone; a line of burnt sienna extended from the middle of her lower lip to the center of her chin. But most bewitching were the delicate blue shadows beneath her eyes. These were achieved by daintily applying a paint made from the wild indigo plant. Her bracelets, necklace and ear ornaments of blue beads added to her natural charm. She spoke in her native language, Vesnor interpreting, and told her story with such eloquence that I wished with all my heart that I knew enough of the tribe's language to understand her softly spoken words.

She was explaining to me, and her every word and gesture were for my benefit as she said: "Long time ago Little Jim marry my sister. She good woman. She cook. She work, make clean house. He no work. No buy dress. He no buy things eat. She hungry all time. She get sick. She die. Little Jim marry E-e. He happy all time. He work. He no lazy. He buy dress. He buy everythings. I too mad. I walk. I walk on trail. I see Little Jim corn. It little grow (not very tall). I think. E-e like corn. I get plenty mad. I walk, maybe five, maybe ten stalk, break down on ground. I too mad."

Like an angry princess she swept to her seat, and I knew that I was not the right judge for this case, for I was ready to defend her for her courage, her beauty and her loyalty to her dead sister. Yet I admired the straightforwardness and sincerity of Little Jim.

Prince's wife took the floor. The women were sisters, but Billy had chosen the more picturesque, the more charming of the two. This woman's story was less dramatic, but differed little from that of her sister. Little Jim's first wife was her sister, she said. He neglected her, and she died. "Now he good to E-e. I mad. I want

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to make go hungry. I walk thirty stalks his corn. I plenty mad." She gave E-e a glance loaded with malice and hesitantly took her seat.

Billy stepped forward and voiced his complaint. E-e had cut seven stalks of his corn. He found the stalks lying in the field. He explained that he needed the corn for food for his family. He would not have seed, he could not fill his storehouse, if his crop were destroyed. His face had lost its jovial expression and was puckered with concern.

E-e, the accused, came forward reluctantly. The look of lazy contentment had drained from her face; there was fear in her dark eyes. She spoke haltingly, with many gestures. "I pick up brush." Her quick fingers went through the motions of gathering and piling brush. "I dry. I want fire. Billy's squaw throw brush. Scatter everywhere." Again her fingers spoke, making the gesture of tossing brush to the winds. "I no find. No make fire. No cook bread. She break Little Jim corn. She make brush scatter. I plenty mad. I walk little on corn. I cut little. I too mad."

I managed to keep a straight face, but was chuckling inside. Those precious, mischievous women. They refused to submit to the deadly monotony of their lives, and added a touch of excitement by playing sly tricks, each striving to be more cunning than the other. I wanted to pat them on their plump shoulders and send them happily home, but when a garden is no larger than the floor of a room, and a family depends on it for food, it must not be the pawn in a game.

We discussed their crimes with great seriousness. They were quick to agree that the destruction of food must stop, and they expected to be penalized, but I hadn't the heart to levy against their pitiful possessions. So I asked them, individually, if they would drop the feud and never revive it, if allowed to go unpunished.

They all shouted in their eagerness, *"Eh! Eh, mi!* (Yes! Yes, you say it!)"

The case was dismissed. I heard of no more such pranks, but

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their love of excitement undoubtedly would prompt them to find some other way to keep the village astir and themselves interested.

Long after the dispute was settled, Billy's wife's reiteration, "I too mad," stayed with me. It helped me to appreciate the basic honesty of these children of nature: no soft words covered angry thoughts; no smile hid a broken heart. They expressed their emotions, with zest and energy and, if the occasion required, with violence, as did the Bear, the Coyote and the Deer who, from the Days of Old, had taught the Havasupai the wisdom they themselves had gleaned from the wilderness when time was young.